

BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY: Hilda Pacheco-DeRego Freitas, 76, retired nutrition aide

"When we were younger when we first moved out there (to Waikīkī) they had polo in the polo fields and we'd go down there and watch them play polo, and ride the elephant [at the zoo]. We'd be the decoys I guess for the other kids. You know, his name was Mr. Conradt and he'd let us go for free on the elephant just so the other kids would want to ride the elephant, too."

Hilda Pacheco-DeRego Freitas, eldest of six children, was born in 1910 in Honoka'a, Hawai'i to Gloria and Martin Pacheco. The family later moved to Kalihi, O'ahu where her father passed away during the flu epidemic of 1920. Her mother then married John DeRego of Paoakalani Avenue.

While her mother and stepfather worked as custodians at Waikīkī School, Hilda Freitas babysat and took on a variety of household jobs in Waikīkī to supplement the family income. She also attended and graduated from Normal School in 1926.

In later years, she worked as a cafeteria assistant, waitress, and nutrition aide.

She married Antone DeRego, a stepbrother, in 1930 and raised two children. She is now married to John Freitas and resides in Kuli'ou'ou.

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ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Hilda Pacheco-DeRego Freitas (HF)

June 9, 1986

Kuli'ou'ou, O'ahu

BY: Michi Kodama-Nishimoto (MK)

MK: This is an interview with Mrs. Hilda Pacheco-DeRego Freitas at her home in Kuli'ou'ou, O'ahu on June 9, 1986. The interviewer is Michi Kodama-Nishimoto.

Okay Mrs. Freitas, the first question I have for you is what was your mother's full name?

HF: My mother's full name was Gloria Delima Tavares.

MK: And from what you've been told about your mother, tell me something about your mother's family background.

HF: My mother's family, both mother and father came from Portugal. And they migrated to the Big Island and my grandfather became a plantation worker and they had several sons and daughters that I know of and they also worked in the plantations. And later on my mother--when she grew older she got married to Joseph Martin Pacheco and at the time they got married he was a butcher. He was born in Pa'auilo. That much I remember.

The first time that I saw my grandparents that I remember [was] when I was gonna be seven years old. My grandmother at the time was an invalid and she didn't live too many years after that. I remember going on the boat to Honoka'a and we were on the boat and they transferred us to a small(er) boat. My mother already had five children and they put us in this little boat and rowed us to Kawaihae Harbor. I remember that it was early morning, real early in the morning, I think about two or three o'clock in the morning we went to this hotel. My mother asked for a room and lodging and they said they had no room in the hotel so I remember sleeping outside on the benches with my brothers and sisters until the taxi driver came to pick us up and take us to Honoka'a to my grandmother's place. And I also remember we had to cross a cow trellis. This man opened the gate for the taxi to go through and my mother said to him, "Hello, Mr. Balouf. How are you?"

He looked in the car and he said to her, "Gloria, my, you're still so pretty."

After all that, we went on to my grandmother's. They took us to my grandmother's house and there we stayed I think about two weeks and I remember my grandmother sitting on this big rocker, rocking back and forth. We would go back of her chair and sort of rock the back legs of the chair. And oh she'd be (so angry)--she couldn't speak because she had a stroke. I'm sure she had. At the time I did not know. I was too young to realize. My mother cleaned up the house 'cause she had then two young sisters and her brother living home with my grandfather. They had peaches in the yard and they had all the trees and they had oh, all kinds of fruit that I can remember.

Then we came back to Honolulu. (Later) I remember my (uncle, aunt and) grandfather (came to live with us). Then my mother became a widow, very very young. She was only twenty-nine years old when she became a widow. My father passed away March 7, 1920. That I remember. And my mother I think married (my stepfather, John DeRego). (It) must've been at the end of November 1921.

MK: Going back to your father, what do you know about your father's family background?

AM: I don't know much about my father's family 'cause my grandmother died I think the day after my father and mother got married. I don't know much about (my grandfather). I know that when they moved from the Big Island to O'ahu, we lived on Gulick Avenue. That I remember. We lived on Gulick Avenue and then my father was working for Union Feed Company. They built a house on Martin Street.

Then we moved from Gulick Avenue to Martin Street and I remember one day (my father) came home from work and he told my mother and this I remember--he had met his stepfather Downtown, I guess his stepfather came to see him and his stepfather said he was going to South America. His stepfather was a Spaniard. His name was Martin. That's why my father took the Martin Pacheco. [HF's grandfather was] going to South America and he was gonna bring me [a papagaio] because he remembered me. [He] was gonna bring me a papagaio--a parrot. My father was telling my mother that and then he said to me, "Oh, your grandpa gonna bring you a parrot, papagaio, parrot." We never heard from him anymore. We didn't so I don't remember.

But I remember the day my father passed away. (The) 1920 flu epidemic that (we) had. And after that it was one thing after another. My mother had to go out and do laundry 'cause she had to support us. When she brought the laundry home she and I ironed. I was just a little girl and we ironed with a charcoal iron. She ironed and I iron--people's [laundry], I remember that.

MK: And when were you born?

HF: I was born April 4, 1910 in Honoka'a.

MK: So when your father passed away you were only about ten years old.

HF: I had just made--no I was not quite ten because he passed away March and I was going to be ten.

MK: And at the time your father passed away, how many children were there in the family?

HF: Six of us. There were six children. I was the oldest.

MK: And when your father passed away and your mother remarried later what was your stepfather's full name?

HF: My stepfather's full name was John DeRego.

MK: And what do you know about your stepfather's family background?

HF: My stepfather, his wife had passed away several years before that and he had, I think, eight or ten children already. But they were all most of them grown up by the time my mother and he married and he came to live with us after they got married and he worked for the California Feed Company. I don't know why he left his job but he did.

Then we all moved to Waikīkī. We were there just a little while when there was so much friction going on because his children didn't like the idea of him marrying this woman with this many children which now, when I look back, I don't blame them too.

So then we moved back to Kalihi and that's where my sister was born, Eleanor, from my mother and my stepfather. She was born there and there we stayed until I think maybe another year and then by that time, well, the [DeRego] girls had gone out and the boys had moved away so we went back to live in the house, in Paoakalani [Avenue].

MK: And so at the time that the family moved to Waikīkī, how many children in all were in the Waikīkī house?

HF: Well, there was six of us. Then my mother had two from him and then the boys moved with their brother up to Pālāma. Then two of them came back home and then the girl that had been home, she moved to her brother's house. So all in all there was six, eight, nine, ten but the boys were really, they were not (living in the house, but they ate there). They built a basement down the bottom and they fixed that up, where the boys slept down there.

MK: You had a full house.

HF: Yeah. We had a full house.

MK: And when your family lived in Waikīkī, what kind of work was your stepfather doing?

HF: After that my stepfather became a janitor at the Waikīkī [Elementary] School. Well, at the time already I was working too. When I got through eighth grade, then I went to Normal School and in those days [they] didn't want you [girls] (to) have education. You know that kind of a thing. So my stepfather was quite angry because I kept on going to school instead of going to work to support, help him to support the children. Two doors away from where we lived, was this lady with the children. I'd get up five o'clock in the morning, I'd go to her house. I'd cook, help to make breakfast, help take care of the kids. I'd dress and I'd go to school way up [Kalihi]. Of course that was when I was still in school up in Kalihi. Then I'd come back and I still took care of her children, all summertime until I got through the eighth grade and I went to Normal School.

From Normal School on I went out to work for different people. I cook for them. I did different things for the different people and [in] Kālia, the Marigold Apartments down there, I cook for different people down there.

MK: Gee, you started working really early.

HF: Oh, I worked real early, I worked real early. As soon as I got to Waikīkī I started working.

MK: You mentioned that you used to take care of the children of the family two doors away from you.

HF: The Jarretts.

MK: What were the Jarretts doing?

HF: Mr. Jarrett, he worked for the Inter-Island [Steamship] Company but she didn't work. Her family came I think from Napo'opo'o, the Big Island. They belonged to the Lindsey family that I can remember. She didn't work but he worked. He went every day to work and I helped to take care of the children and there were six of them. Six children I helped to take care. I washed the clothes and (hung out) the clothes. I cooked and sometimes they would buy fifty cents [worth of] poi and when I first went to work for them I did not know how to mix poi. When they brought this big bag of poi for fifty cents what in the heck was I gonna do with this big bag of poi? We were not poi-eating family. And so I took this bag of poi and I had two hands mixing poi.

When she came into the kitchen and she said, "What are you doing? What are you doing?"

And I says, "I don't know, I'm trying to (mix) this poi."

And she said, "Well, we don't do it that way."

I said, "Well, just teach me how to do it. That's all there is to

it."

So she took half of it, put it in one bowl and took the other half and then showed me how to mix it, and that's how I learned how to mix poi. And I'd come home in the afternoon after school when I was working for her and I'd pick up the clothes from the line. I'd fold the clothes, I ironed and I helped her to cook and when I would go home in the evenings sometime it was seven-thirty, seven o'clock. The little boy, Sammy, would cry because he wanted to go with me. (Chuckles) I didn't have an easy life. I had a hard life when I was young, very hard life.

MK: You know, for all that work how much were you getting paid?

HF: I was getting eight dollars a week. That's not much money for all the work. I'd go real early in the morning. That was hard work. And I worked Sundays too. Only thing about working for them was, every Sunday, about nine o'clock in the morning after the work was done and then I'd go to church, we'd come home. She would have a taxi, Kuni's taxi would come, the big taxi with that big seats in the center and we all go for a ride for a couple of hours. Every Sunday they did that. I don't know how much they paid him but we'd go for a ride, come home. We'd eat lunch. I'd put the babies to bed and I would be so anxious to go home to my own family, even though they were only two doors away. But you know how, I (was) still young. I wanna go (home) to my (family). . . . So I did that for so many years.

MK: And you mentioned that Kuni's taxi would take you out on a ride, where would you go?

HF: Well, one time we would go, I guess, around---well, we lived in Waikiki. Then we'd go maybe down to town or different places and then we'd come out this way. Of course you couldn't come too far out this way. There weren't many streets out this way, couldn't come out this way. And whatever streets they were, they were mostly dirt roads going up this other side out here.

But they took us every week to somewhere but now, right now I can't remember exactly where they took us but they took us for a ride. I guess that was the outing she gave the children too because we all small and everybody would dress up. The little girl would dress up and they had lots of family in Kaimuki up here, the Jarretts. He had family in Kaimuki.

MK: And then you mentioned that you worked in the Kālia area . . .

HF: (Yes.)

MK: Exactly which homes did you work in, in the Kālia area?

HF: Oh, God, I can't remember. I was trying to think the other day and I was trying to think there's been so many people I worked for in

Kālia. One of them I cooked for and the other one I cleaned house for. The other one I took care of her children. Heck, was so many people I'm trying to forget. I mean trying to remember their names.

Thorntons, I remember the Thorntons. I worked for the Thorntons for quite some time. I took care of her children and they both worked for the [Honolulu] Advertiser. They were reporters for the [Honolulu] Advertiser at that time and oh, I can't remember the lady that was pregnant, I had to cook her dinners for her. The early part of the day I would go too. (Mrs. Smith) was a teacher and I'd clean her house. I'd come back and I'd clean. I'd cook for these other people. But for the Thorntons I worked--they moved a little further over--they were living in one area. Then they moved on the other side and I worked for them then.

And next door was the Buster Crabbe family. They lived next door to the Thorntons and I remember when I'd be waiting for Mr. and Mrs. Thornton to come home so I could go home, I would be looking into their dining room, into the Crabbes' dining room and there were the two boys, the Crabbe boys, Buster Crabbe and his brother, and (their) mother. I think they had a stepmother at that time. I remember those boys but I didn't ever talk to them 'cause I was younger than them so. . . . That's all I remember.

MK: And then the last time we met, you mentioned something about Dewey Court.

HF: Yeah, that was right off Dewey Court Kālia, that's Dewey Court where the Marigold Apartments were now. That's all Dewey Court but they were. . . .

MK: What did Dewey Court look like in the old days? I'm curious.

HF: Well, Dewey Court, the street going straight down, and on each side of the street, both sides there were all these cottages that people lived in. Most of them were two-bedroom cottages that people lived in, right down to the end, all those cottages.

MK: What kinds of people lived in Dewey Court?

HF: Most of them were white people, Haole people. I think lots of them were transient too. They must have been because I'd see one family one time and the next time I'd see somebody else. But oh, they worked down here maybe. I don't remember all their names 'cause I cannot. I didn't go from house to house. All I did was I went from one house, two houses, three houses I worked in that area.

And then later on the Thorntons moved on the other side, bigger house. I went to work for the Thorntons too over there. I remember that they had a fellow by the name of--he was a reporter for--I don't know if it was for the [Honolulu] Advertiser, Jack Snell--he lived with the Thorntons at that time and he was a very

good reporter.

MK: The last time you told me about an incident that occurred when you were coming home.

HF: Oh yeah, when I was coming home from work. I was coming home and this car with about four Filipinos, I think it was. They wanted me to get in the car with them and I kept walking fast. When I walked ahead they'd take the car ahead. When I come back they'd bring the car back, and back and forth, back and forth. For a little while there I thought I was gonna die of fright so I ran all the way back to the Thorntons and then he took me home because I was too afraid. I didn't know where they were. I was too afraid. From the Thorntons I had to walk to Kalia Road and then out to catch the streetcar to go home. So that was one incident. But after that I never had any more trouble.

But then my mother was so angry because they'd come home late from work. They [Thorntons] were supposed to come home at certain time and they didn't come home a certain [time]. . . . I'd feed the children and cook for her and everything and I expected her to come home but I guess being a reporter it was not that easy to come home, both of them. So I don't know what happened to him, but her, I saw her a couple, few times after I had gotten married and everything, but I don't know what else happened to the boys.

MK: And those days how much did you get paid for doing that?

HF: Oh I got paid very little, very little, I can't even quite remember. One lady maybe paid me three dollars a week and the other lady maybe paid me four dollars a week because I clean her house. I go clean her house in the morning and then the other one I'd cook for her maybe a couple of hours. And she couldn't stand her own cooking. I don't know why so I'd cook for her. She'd eat. When they get through eating I wash the dishes. Then I go home.

MK: And how did you get all these little jobs?

HF: Mouth. From mouth to mouth. You know like when this lady would say, "Oh, we have a girl."

This lady would come over and ask me, "Hilda, you want to clean my house in the morning or clean my house on Saturday?"

One was a teacher and I'd say, "Okay, how many hours?" I'd go there and I'd clean her house and everything, dust her furniture, clean the house, wash the dishes and all those things. I worked there quite a number of years until I finished Normal School. Two years I finished Normal School. That's when I applied for a job. I got that, I told you at Kalihi-Waena [Elementary School], worked there for just a couple of weeks, so then I got very disappointed with that other girl, that friend of mine that tried to--just took the job out of my hands so well. . . .

MK: That was when you were a cafeteria assistant.

HF: Yeah, yeah I was a cafeteria assistant.

MK: And before that I think you mentioned that you had worked in family homes in the 'Ōhūa area?

HF: Oh yeah, I baby-sat in that area. In summertime I worked at the cannery too. In 'Ōhūa Lane, 'Ōhūa Avenue I baby-sat for people at night, quite a number of people I would baby-sit and they'd go out and I'd watch them and feed the children and then I'd clean the kitchen and then wait for them to come home and sometime they'd come home one, two o'clock in the morning and they'd be so piluted that I'd come home and walk by myself and then my mother would say, "Why didn't you make the man bring you home?"

And I said, "Why should he bring me home when he was so drunk? I better walk home myself."

And so I walk(ed) home, many a night I walk(ed) home by myself.

MK: And what kinds of homes were there in the 'Ōhūa area?

HF: Well, not on 'Ōhūa Street, it was more on the opposite side. At that time they had, I don't know if you know, Dr. [G.M.] Halpern. His parents lived around in that area too and what you call? I had my aunt. I don't know how come she went to work for them for little while, for Dr. Halpern's father, he worked Hawaiian Electric at that time. And in that area there, Cleghorn Drive and all in there, those homes, I used to take care of the children when they go out at night.

MK: Were they mostly White families?

HF: White families. All mostly White families. The people who were Japanese lived 'Ōhūa on this [Diamond Head] side of the church [St. Augustine's], all along that side, on that side. This side of the 'Ōhūa Avenue. All the White people lived on the other side and then of course on Moana [Hotel] side, that's when they had all the people that worked for the hotels. Lots of those little cottages, the people work for the hotels, lived in there too.

MK: When your family was living in Waikīkī, I think that you mentioned that your mother also worked.

HF: [She] was a janitress at Waikīkī School. She got in there too.

MK: And then you also mentioned that she was a midwife, do you have some stories about her midwife experiences?

HF: No, I don't, I don't know where she went. She'd come home. Then somebody would come to the house and knock on the door and say, somebody needed a You know. Of course, she knew the people.

They'd take her and sometimes she'd come home two or three o'clock in the morning and oh, my stepfather didn't want her to do that. He was very much against her doing midwifery, truthfully, but she helped quite a number of people around there, helped by being midwife.

MK: How come your stepfather objected to her doing that?

HF: Well, I guess he felt that maybe if something went wrong then she'd get the blame for whatever happened. Sometime you know those things do happen too sometime.

MK: I think you told me that there was a little girl named after you.

HF: Yeah. One of the girls that she had been midwife to, was named after me. I don't know where she is now truthfully. I think she was a Harakawa girl, yeah.

MK: You know I was wondering exactly where in Waikīkī did your family live?

HF: Paoakalani [Avenue] and Cartwright [Road].

MK: And what did your house look like back then?

HF: It was a high house, quite pretty high, had a nice front porch and it was--it was not a cottage. You couldn't call it a cottage. It was pretty nice house that time. We had nice three big bedrooms, nice big living room and dining room, great big kitchen and nice stone steps going up. And then in the front of it had sidewalk with two pillars, stone pillars right in the front of the house. Was a nice house.

MK: What did you have in your yard?

HF: Oh, in the yard we had one, two, three, three big coconut trees and then on the corner of Cartwright and Paoakalani we had a big, what is that? Pepper tree, pepper, big with its long leaves and the kids (made) a treehouse (on top of the tree). Then they had ferns, great big tubs of ferns on the steps coming down and they had a couple of mango trees and papaya trees in the back, was a nice place.

MK: And in general what did the houses in the neighborhood look like?

HF: Well, at the time everybody had a pretty nice house. The Akakas had a real nice house and then next to [them] was the Harakawas and the Purdys had a nice house and of course the Jarretts rented from the Purdys and [next were] the Parkers. They all had nice houses. Well, to us those days they were nice houses.

MK: And when you think back to your small kid days and if you were starting from your block, who were your neighbors? Try and go

around the block. Paoakalani [Avenue] and Cartwright [Road].

HF: On the right of us there were the Akakas. And the back of the Akakas were the DeFries, was us and then it was Fuji, what was his name?

MK: Oh, Matsuzawas?

HF: Matsuzawas, yeah, the Matsuzawas and then the Sasaki Court and the Spencers and then there was a big empty lot where the kids all played there and then was the Donelleys and a Japanese family and then the Rasmussens. On this side I said was the Akakas, the DeFries and then the DeFries had this big empty lot so that later they built a couple of houses in there and it was Bella Moore. The Moores, that picture I showed you--the girls they lived there. Then was a Japanese family that lived in that big red house, I can't remember their names but I remember the girl, what they looked like, the girl and then it was the court, what is the name of those people now that--they had a court there, Cunha, the Cunha Estate, the Cunha Estate there. And then on the other side I remember the Cunha Estates and the Camaras and I think the Robinsons lived on the other side there. And then up the other side the Jacksons, up this side was the Purdys, Parkers and then Kaawakauos and "Bayaw" [Williams] and them, the Williams and Ewalikos. On this side above the Parkers I don't quite remember who the people were but the Joys came there later. They came there way way later, way later.

(Later) they built all those new houses and then oh, there was a Japanese[-language] school. I remember that. And below the Akakas there (were) the Manus and below the Manus (were) the Bishaws. There (were) lots of the kids I don't remember their names. I don't remember their names but later on when I grew up I went to work. I had no time. We didn't have time to play, going to work, came home and went to work.

MK: You remembered quite a few of the names though. What do you remember about say each family, like say the Akakas, what stands out in your mind about the Akakas?

HF: The Akakas were people that never mingled with anyone. Their girls never played with anyone. Their mother was very stern-looking always. 'Cause I can remember that. I remember that much about her.

MK: And next to the Akakas . . .

HF: The Manus. Oh, the Manus were nice, nice Mr. Manu and I think they had a daughter by the name (of) Julia and (and a boy,) Sammy. I think it was Sam Manu, and Julia. They were nice. He was (a) nice man, oh real nice man. Yeah, he was a nice man.

MK: And the Williams family.

HF: The Williams, "Bayaw" [Williams] yeah on the other side. He had a stepmother too if I'm not mistaken. The Kaawakauos were real nice, nice people.

MK: And you have the Matsuzawas, Fuji's family.

HF: Yeah, Esther. They were nice. They were very nice. Fuji, Esther and she had two children, a boy and a girl, and she was a nurse, Dr. [Gardner] Black's nurse she was.

MK: Do you remember anything about the elder Mr. Matsuzawa, the man who used to go out?

HF: Yeah, he used to have a little wagon. He had (a) little (red) wagon. He was kind of a little, small, short little fellow, yeah. I remember him.

MK: What did he sell in his little wagon?

HF: I think he sold candy and different things. Truthfully, we used to see him go out in the morning and every day he would go out but I guess we didn't have the money to buy anything from him. You know in those days money was kind of scarce. I don't quite remember buying too many things from him. I don't really. . . . I think he was by the park if I'm not mistaken. I think or else by the park or up on Kapahulu Avenue going where the picture was taken. If I'm not mistaken that was where he worked but I'm not too sure about that.

MK: When you were a small girl I know that you spent a lot of time working, but when you weren't working did you get involved and see the movies? You mentioned that sometimes you folks would . . .

HF: Oh, yeah, the Japanese[-language] school . . .

MK: . . . see the movies.

HF: At night the Japanese[-language] school would have (movies). (We would) go to the Japanese[-language] school. I don't think it was more than once a month, maybe not even that. We'd go see the Japanese movies and then we also went when I was a little bit older, the Catholic church, St. Augustine's had movies there too and we'd go and watch the movies (whenever they had it), not very often. They had it once in a while and sometimes on Sundays when I was a little bit older we'd go down, my sister and I, to the bandstand when I had a little time off. I'd go down to the bandstand and listen to the Hawaiian band play music. When we were younger when we first moved out there (to Waikiki) they had polo in the polo fields and we'd go down there and watch them play polo and ride the elephant [at the zoo]. We'd be the decoys I guess for the (children), for the other kids. You know, his name was Mr. Conradt and he'd let us go for free on the elephant just so the other kids would want to ride the elephant too. We'd go round the park on the

elephant.

MK: Was that the famous Daisy?

HF: Daisy, yes. Daisy.

MK: And you mentioned St. Augustine's. Was your family a member of the church?

HF: Oh yes. My mother, we were members of the church and I belonged to the sodality and my mother (did too belong to the church). And my mother would make sweet bread for them [for food sales] and I was a member of the (St. Augustine) sodality there too.

MK: As a member of the sodality what kinds of activities did you have?

HF: There was not very much of activities that I can remember. Not very much activity. It was more religious kind of a thing. You didn't do too much kind of a thing. Later on when my daughter grew up she belonged to the sodality 'cause she went to St. Augustine, see. And then she belonged to the sodality and they had a little bit more activity than we did.

MK: And in your time who was the priest there?

HF: Father Valentin and then later when we were a little bit older we had Father Emil Rogers. He was the pastor there at that time, too.

MK: I've heard of this Father Valentin, what type of a man was he?

HF: He was a big, strong fellow, very tall. He drove a little roadster, good-looking car, big strong fellow. He did not live there, I don't think. I think he lived some place else than the church there. I don't remember him living there. But I remember they had this big banyan tree. The big banyan tree was there and the church was all latticed. You know the sides of the whole church was all latticed. You know like that. Was a nice church, big church. Of course, now it's not like that anymore.

MK: And the last time I talked with you, you mentioned that there were quite a few peddlers that came into the neighborhood.

HF: Oh, yeah.

MK: Tell me about that.

HF: Some of these little Japanese fellows that (sold) rock candy and (he would hit the candy with a small) hammer, and I think it was five cents or ten cents a little package. He'd hit the candy. He had a big white apron on. He was very short with the big apron and (with a pan in front of him), [he'd] come and sell candy to us and the other fellow was a Chinese fellow who, he'd yell out, "Long one, short one, candy." So we'd all come out and look for long

one, short one candy. And I guess maybe we had a nickel or something. . . . I don't know how we got money really. And there was also a manapua man. Well, he came in a little bit later when my daughter was born. He came in and sold manapua. I think maybe he was there around when I was younger but I can't quite remember him then. But he'd sell manapuas and things too.

MK: How about the na'au man?

HF: Oh, the na'au man. Yeah, he came in little bit later in life. He'd sell na'au and we'd buy this na'au, ten cents a cup or three cups for twenty-five cents and we would have that for our dinner. (Chuckles) Long rice in it.

MK: I know in that area, on Kalākaua Avenue, there were stores and a whole line of businesses. What do you remember about that line of businesses?

HF: Well, the first one was Aoki Store. Then there was an Ibaraki [Store]. There was a cleaners and there was Kuni's Taxi and then after that--there was a space in between because that's where the [stream was]--it was a bridge. And then was Tahara's ice cream parlor and the barbershop. The barbershop was there and then there was a fellow by the name of--they used to sell--his wife was a dressmaker and he used to sell. . . . He made Japanese cakes. I forgot his name, not Kuni. And I see their daughter once in a while down in the bowling alley. And then there was another cleaners at the time over there too. There was another (clothes) cleaners I can't remember and what else was at the end over there? Then later on Aoki built this big store over there, the corner (of 'Ōhua) and then on the other side of Aoki Store--on the right-hand side was where the Akanas lived. Joe Akana lived on the back, in that side there. That's what I remember, Joe Akana. And on this side was a service station. Back of the service station was the church, service station, small little church. I can picture his wife and he--the owners of the service station. I cannot remember their names but I can picture them, the two of them.

MK: Was that a Japanese couple called the Sanos?

HF: Yeah, the Sanos. Mr. and Mrs. Sano. She walked that fast. Yeah, the Sanos. That's right. I remember that.

MK: And did you go around there shopping for your family?

HF: Yeah, we would shop at Aoki Store 'cause there was no other stores around there to shop, and Ibaraki's. And Ibaraki took over where Aoki was later, made his store bigger and Aoki moved down to the corner.

MK: And across the street would be the beach area. As a small kid what did you do on the beach area?

HF: Well, when we were kids, we would [go] on the beach area--and across the street from there, there was a wall, a stone wall. On the other side of the stone wall was lots of rocks and that's where sometimes we used to go back there and. . . . When I was younger when we first moved out there we used to go and just look around for crabs and things like that and look around for pipipis, all those kind of things, look inside there and my brothers used to fish. They fished quite a bit when they got a little bit older.

MK: And then heading out into the other area of Waikīkī, the 'Āinahau area, what did you folks do out in the 'Āinahau area, if you folks did go there?

HF: I went to work there. I didn't play out there. I just went to work and took care of the children over there and different families I had to take care but the boys [HF's brothers] used to roam around there. They had mango trees and coconuts and things. I remember my brothers used to go hang around in that area but I did not have time to play out there. I had to work. I worked. I baby-sat at night, in the evening. I didn't have time to play around that area.

MK: And then I was wondering, you've worked a whole lot as a child, how about your brothers and sisters, did they also help with the family income?

HF: Both brothers worked very young. My brother, he worked very young. When he got through school I don't think [he] went to eighth grade. They worked for Hawaiian Dredging and my sister, (Roseline), when she got a little bit older, the one in the picture. She took care of [Emma] Kaawakauo's little girl. She baby-sat Kaawakauo's daughter, when Kaawakauo went to teach. She baby-sat that one. But not that much. She didn't do that much of baby-sitting. I did more than any other and my brother, I remember my oldest brother next to me. He went to work young and my other brother. We all worked real young.

MK: You mentioned that your brother worked for Hawaiian Dredging, did he work on the Ala Wai Canal?

HF: Oh yeah, I think my second brother used to do work over there some place. I forgot exactly but he worked around that area 'cause they dredged up all the thing. And they used to--all those great big pipes--all that was vacant land. All those great big pipes, all those rocks and things. Water would be flowing all the way down till they closed up all that--they built that area over there. They filled it up from the canal, they'd dig from the canal and they filled up all that area, all those houses came on after a while, years after though.

MK: I know that the last time I came here you showed me a picture of the old Stonewall Gang. What do you remember about the Stonewall Gang?

HF: I married one of them.

(Laughter)

HF: Well, those Stonewall Gang. . . . I was talking to my sister, my young sister over there. She said she remembered that when she was younger, of course she was way younger than I--I was thirteen when she was born and she remembered that when she would go out and sit on the stone wall her and some of the other girls--I don't know if it was Margaret Lorch or some of the other girls that would be down there and as soon as they sat down . . .

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

MK: Okay you were talking about the Stonewall Gang.

HF: Yeah, and then they [girls] would be sitting there and maybe some of the service boys from up on the hill come down and talk to them and then, then some Stonewall [Gang] boys would come there and tell 'em to move on and move on. If they didn't want [to move on], then they'd beat 'em up. I think the purpose of those [Stonewall Gang boys]--they watched over the girls in the neighborhood. I don't know but that's what I think they did. But they'd sit in the evenings, the boys and all that and play music, guitar, ukulele, and they'd sing and they'd play volleyball down the beach and do all those kind of. . . . There's a majority of them went fishing and hardly any of them worked. And they fished and they sold the fish down there and they swam, surfed, whatever you know, so a lot of them were there.

MK: A lot of people have told me about (Joseph) "Steppy" DeRego.

HF: Yeah.

MK: How is he related to you?

HF: He's my husband's brother. He was my stepbrother and they played music. He was a musician and he played music and he went out and played. I think he played with Ray Kinney for a while there too. I remember that. And Ray Kinney was married to one of the Holt girls, Tani Holt. My "Josie" [a.k.a. "Steppy"] played with him and "Josie" played with a lot of Al Kealoha Perry and all of those people that I remember. He was a very good musician.

MK: And then your husband, what was his name?

HF: Antone.

MK: And do you remember anything specific about his activities as a boy

growing up?

HF: Well, he played the uke [ukelele]. I remember him, he played the uke and he was a regular beach boy I guess at the time and he--later on he worked for Pearl Harbor [Naval Shipyard]. He went to work at Pearl Harbor when he got older and when I married him he was a fireman.

MK: And when was that?

HF: Nineteen thirty. I married him in 1930.

MK: At the time that you folks got married, what kind of work were you doing?

HF: Well, when we got married I didn't work. Then in 1941 when the war [World War II] broke out, 1942 I went to work for McKinley High School. I worked there and I worked there for I think a year or two years and then after that I worked for Benson Smith for a while and after I worked for Benson Smith [and Co., Ltd.] I didn't work anymore.

My husband passed away and I didn't work and when I moved out here I didn't work 'cause it was too far away for me to work although I had an opportunity to work. Right at that time just before I moved out here--Pālāma Settlement called me to run their cafeteria and I said no. It was too far for me to go all the way down there. I didn't drive at the time too and I didn't go to work. I stayed home over here. I didn't work till my kids were grown up.

Then after I got married here and I found that I was gonna need social security I overheard one of my friends ask someone if she wanted to work and this girl said no, she didn't want to work so I asked my friend what kind of a job it was and she told me all about it and I thought I was kind of interested in it so I applied for it and I got in. From then on I worked for the University of Hawai'i. I worked for School of Public Health and then I was laid off--not laid off but there was no money 'cause I worked all the time when they had grants from different things.

Then I again worked in two different areas with the low-income people. I worked down in Kalihi housing and Pālāma housing, Pālolo housing, Kalākaua housing. I worked in all of those housing, different areas. Then I worked in Waimānalo steady for four years.

MK: And when did you retire?

HF: I retired in (1972). I was gonna retire in April, ('72) and my--I had all my papers filled up and everything and my boss said, "No, Hilda, I can't find anyone to take your place. We've had several women and they just can't do what you were doing so you have to work until I can find someone." So I worked until August, August ('72) and I think when you do that kind of a work I was doing, I

think a number of years is enough to see what goes on so I didn't go out and work anymore. I retired (when I was sixty-two years old).

MK: And you've been living in this house in Kuli'ou'ou since . . .

HF: Nineteen forty-six.

MK: And prior to that I think you mentioned during your first marriage you lived a little while in Waikīkī?

HF: Yeah, when I first got married I lived in Waikīkī, no, I lived in Kapahulu when I first got married. I lived in Kapahulu and then later on I moved to Waikīkī.

MK: And whereabouts in Waikīkī was that?

HF: In Waikīkī, I lived on Cartwright Road, close to Pākī [Avenue] in the Cunha Estate, the houses of the Cunha Estate.

MK: What did that place look like, the Cunha Estate cottages?

HF: Well, right where we lived there was four little cottages on our little alley there and back of me there was two more cottages and then I think the Robinsons lived on the end. There was about six cottages right in there that we lived in and I lived there until my daughter was five years old. And then I moved back to Kapahulu.

MK: That Cunha Estate, since it was owned by the Cunhas did you ever have any occasion to meet any of the Cunhas?

HF: Oh he ["Sonny" Cunha] would come around once in a while, great big Cunha and he had a very pretty wife and he had a son and a daughter but they really did not take care of the place. A Mr. Medeiros took care of the place. We had to send the money to Mr. Medeiros who lived up in, I don't know, up Punchbowl somewheres I think, that's where he lived. I know what he looks like, Mr. Cunha and I know what his wife looked like and his daughter and the son but they were not around. They never came around.

MK: Who were your neighbors in that Cunha Estate cottages?

HF: The first, my neighbor was--I had a Mr. Gallett that lived on the side there and I had Spanish people. They lived in the front of me, Spanish people. I forgot their name and then below on this other side I had Mrs. Anthony but she moved out. Then who and who lived there was the lady who bought the Williams' house, the Japanese lady who--I can't remember her name. She bought the Williams' house I think it was. She was a dressmaker. She lived there for a while too. Next to Kaawakauo she bought I think. I can't remember her name and then back of me was the Camaras, Mr. and Mrs. Camara and next to the side of Camara I don't remember because they faced the other way most of the time.

MK: Back in those days since you had a little girl to raise, what was Waikīkī like to raise a child in?

HF: Well, it was not rough. It was not rough. At that time she was five when we moved away but when she came back she was in St. Augustine School till she was a kindergartener. She went from kindergarten to eighth grade. She graduated there. It was not rough. She was into all kind of activities in the church and she was in the sodality and she also was in every play that they had there. And she swam for Myrtle Club because my husband was a swimmer and he swam for the Myrtle Swimming Club. And every day after school she--if my husband didn't take [her] 'cause he was fireman, she'd walk with all these other kids and they'd go to the Natatorium and they swam there. She swam in the Natatorium and she was a very good swimmer because her father's family swam quite a bit. The day the war broke out she was to swim down Ala Moana. Her and this girl was scheduled to swim I don't know, mile or mile and a half, and they couldn't because the war broke out. She was to swim on a Sunday and the war came was what? Saturday, no Sunday morning. Yeah, that week I think she was supposed to swim. At the time she was in a play too when the war broke out and she was at the church. After mass they had to go and what you call, practice, Christmas play.

MK: So many things were happening when . . .

HF: So many things happening . . .

MK: . . . when the war broke out.

HF: So many things were happening. Then she graduated from St. Augustine. Then she went to the [Sacred Hearts] Academy for a year but she said that was no challenge there so she--her father wanted her to graduate from Academy--why I don't know, but she went to Maryknoll [High School] and she graduated from Maryknoll.

MK: Looking back you lived in Waikīkī for quite a while when you were a young girl back before you got married and I was wondering what are your feelings about having lived in Waikīkī?

HF: I thought it was great at the time because whenever we had time, summertime if we had a little time we'd put on our bathing suits and go right down to the beach and come back again and take our bathing suits off, leave it right there, eat and go back to the beach again. And when you think about stupid, stupid people we were. Well, kids were stupid. The tidal wave time came. The water would recede all the way back, go back all the way for miles out and everybody would be walking on the beach on the sand and everything not realizing that that water could come right back. Things like that, that you didn't know about, or think about. You didn't know about. And we'd go. . . . Oh, in the evenings we'd go down to sit on the stone wall when we weren't working and watch the streetcars go by. That was our main pleasure I guess. I don't

know.

MK: Now when you visit Waikīkī or think back about all the years that have passed what do you see as the major changes in Waikīkī?

HF: I see it has become a concrete jungle. That's what I feel but I can't even find Paoakalani Road anymore. I looked for the [road]. . . . We went down there a few years back. My sister-in-law came from the Mainland. My brother too and we got off the car and we walked, was so different, so different. It was so hard to visualize, to see where we were living and what the kids did and all of that, so different, so different and right on the corner there, that's where they have that Scandia now too. And the Rasmussens have Scandia I and Scandia II [condominiums] and Mr. [Axel] Rasmussen was Norwegian and he lived on the corner and he was a nice man. He had an upholstery shop, Mr. Rasmussen. At Pawa'a he had an upholstery shop.

MK: So the major change for you is that it turned into a concrete jungle.

END OF INTERVIEW

WAIKĪKĪ, 1900 - 1985: ORAL HISTORIES

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